



# IN THE PASTURE: BY JULIEN DUPRE.



WRITING FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

This painting shows a young peasant woman attired in a striped dress and blouse. She is striving to manage the rebellious cow. A rich green landscape is shown, with the red roof of a cottage in the distance. Across a stream through the middle ground, several cattle are seen standing under the trees.

There is the suggestion of vigorous muscular movement in the figure of the woman and also in that of the animal.

Julien Dupre was born in Paris, France, in 1851. He studied under three teachers, Pils, Laugée and Lehmann. He has won the following medals: Third

class medal, 1880, at the Paris Salon; second class medal at the exhibition of 1881; silver medal, Paris Exposition of 1889; gold medal at Munich Exhibition of 1890. His painting, "La Vache à l'anche," was purchased by the French Government for the museum of the Luxembourg at Paris.

## A N Old Fashioned Christmas in the South Described by Mrs. Charles H. Gibson.

Special Correspondence of the Sunday Republic.

New York, Dec. 12.—A real old Southern Christmas dinner! The term seemed to carry with it the odor of savory viands, the merry laugh of gay lads and ladies, the flutter of frocks and bright ribbons, soft strains from mellow violins, the memory of rooms decked with evergreens and holly—a happy and festive spirit reigning everywhere.

This was my dream of a Southern Christmas Day, for I have never had the good fortune to make one of the merry party which yearly meets at some far-famed hospitable mansion, and on the day of the gayety and good-fellowship was all I could claim. To a wider understanding of Southern holiday festivities I am indebted to one of the gentlewomen of the South—a hostess famous in her day for her lavish and enjoyable hospitality—Mrs. Charles H. Gibson, who, as the wife of a Maryland Senator—himself a famous gourmet—served prominently in Washington's exclusive diplomatic circle for many years. Her home was the scene of great gayety, and her dinners were famous, not only for their perfection of detail and arrangement, but for the charming persons who gathered about the hospitable board.

The recipes she has originated have been as widely copied as the bon mots of the after-dinner speakers, and her punches have been drunk in toasts to famous Southern beauties by the nation's most celebrated bachelors.

**Southern Christmas Dinner.**  
Who could better give one an idea of the festive atmosphere of good cheer and the substantial old-fashioned dishes that help to make a Southern Christmas dinner the banquet feast it is?

So I called upon Mrs. Gibson and asked her to talk about a Christmas dinner in the South.

She received me in a dainty little room, all green and white. The green tapestried walls, and the colonial woodwork made a fitting background for the mahogany tables and chairs which had been in Mrs. Gibson's

family for more than two hundred years. The whole seemed to be a bit of old Maryland transplanted from the banks of the Chesapeake to the bluffs of Cathedral Heights, which rise so bleakly from the wide Hudson.

It was cozy and comfortable within, and as we sat toasting our feet before the grate fire Mrs. Gibson forgot her present quiet surroundings in reminiscences of the family reunions of the past.

Imagine a great wide-roofed mansion, pillared with stately white columns, and topped a hill overlooking a winding river. From three sides stretch the rolling, cultivated fields, cut here and there by narrow ribbons of roadways. The branches of the trees are bending beneath the weight of the fleecy white snow. For once in a while they do have a "white Christmas," and great is the rejoicing when this happens, for then the roads are alive with merry sleighing parties, and the air is echoing to the crisp jingle of sleigh bells from morning until long after the pale moon has come and gone.

In the "great house," as the family mansion is usually referred to by the colored servants, there are great bustle and an ever-increasing activity. The married sons and daughters, with the newest baby for grand-mother to pass judgment upon, begin to arrive a few days before Christmas, and the road to the station is well beaten by the hoofs of the old carriage horses.

**Activity in the "Quarters."**  
Down in the "quarters" busy brown-skinned children are trotting about, running errands for important, pestered "mammies," and trundling loads of evergreen and holly with which to decorate the "great house." The great wide hall, which is such a well-known feature of all Colonial structures, is usually the center of all activity, and there the frames of the old family portraits are hung with evergreen, and the carved mahogany balustrade of the shallow stepped, polished stair is twisted

about with the crisp green until half its old-fashioned beauty is hidden from sight.

### Wreaths of Holly.

The great drawing-room windows are hung with fat wreaths of holly, tied with the huge bows of soft white ribbons, and the dining-room, where so much of the holiday time is spent, comes in for its most important share of holiday decorations.

A real Southern house party of relatives only is seldom made up of less than twenty or twenty-five persons, and it is easy to guess at the bustle and fun of getting so large a family together about a Christmas tree, the size of which must be in proportion to the load of gifts it is expected to hold.

Selecting and bringing in the Christmas tree is an occasion of wild delight and excitement to the children, who clamor to accompany "Uncle Edward" or "Uncle Simon" as he starts out on his important errand, and stringing of popcorn and gilded nuts is left for the feminine members of the family.

"You can't go very far for your Christmas tree in New York," I remarked to Mrs. Gibson as she smiled over some memory of tree decorating.

"No," she replied, "and you miss a large part of the fun of the whole thing, too. I used to think that Christmas wasn't complete unless I made one of the party who hindered, rather than helped, bring the tree in."

### Hanging the Gifts.

"In our family it was always a custom to trim and decorate our tree and hang the gifts the day before Christmas. Then on Christmas Eve the tree was lighted up, and we were all allowed to gaze our fill—but from a respectful distance. The servants were always invited in to share this speculative view, and then we were sent to bed to dream of what Santa Claus had put in our stockings and which one of the mysterious-looking packages on the tree bore our name."

"I can imagine how early you were up in the morning," I suggested.

"Yes, indeed," she answered, laughing; "bright and early we were marshaled in the library, and there we awaited, with what meager patience we could command, the gathering of the whole clan. Our first view of the tree seemed even more of a delight than that of the night before, and when the distribution of the gifts began

there was no limit to our joy and enthusiasm."

"What hour of the day was set for Christmas dinner?" I inquired.

"Generally about 2 or 3 o'clock, never later; and, of course, the dinner was an occasion to which our cooks had been devoting their thoughts and energies for weeks past."

"An old-fashioned Christmas dinner in the South, to which at least twenty or thirty persons sat down, was made up on the following lines. We had:

Oysters on Half Shell.  
Cream of Celery.  
Baked Salmon, Sauce Hollandaise.  
Sherry.  
Roast Turkey, Stuffed with Chestnuts.  
Cauliflower, Fried Hominy.  
Chicken.  
Roman Punch.  
Sweetbread, Larded.  
French Peas.  
Celery and Lettuce Salad, with Old Virginia Ham.  
Bouquet, Chateau Yquem.  
Braised Potatoes.  
Ice Cream.  
Marrow.  
Black Coffee.  
Crème de Menthe.

"The table was always decorated with English holly, and a bit of this was stuck in the large, round pudding just before the brandy was poured over it."

"I remember one Christmas a servant who had never seen a burning pudding was detailed to fetch it to the table. As he lifted it up some one touched a match to the brandy. The blue flames frightened the poor fellow so that he let the platter and pudding crash to the floor, crying:

"Fo' de Lawd, misus, I ain't ready to die! Fo' de Lawd, I ain't! That year our Christmas dinner lacked the usual plum pudding."

"Is ham served with green salad a Southern dish?" I asked, "and is the ham baked with champagne?" for I thought, of course, it couldn't be plain boiled ham.

### Ham and Salad.

"We always serve sliced ham with salad, and our old Maryland and Virginia hams are much too fine to be spoiled by fancy cooking. Nowhere in the country do they cure such delicious hams as near where I lived."

"Punch was always a prominent feature of the Christmas dinner, and we had a huge china bowl which had been used by our family on such occasions for years. In the bottom of the bowl was painted a picture, and it was one of our family tradi-

tions that we must drink until the picture could be seen."

"What did you do after the long dinner was over?" I inquired.

"After the dinner the older folks often got about the huge fireplace in the hall and talked and visited, while the younger members of the family went for a drive or horseback ride across country. If we were lucky enough to have snow, then all the cutters were put in service, and we went spinning along over the roads, meeting friends and acquaintances at nearly every turn."

### Evening Holiday Party.

"Often Christmas night was devoted to a ball, a huge affair, given by some one in the neighborhood, and to this every one went, young and old, and under evergreen-twined beams we danced the old dances—Sir Roger Coverley and Varsoviana until almost dawn."

"Christmas in the South doesn't end with Christmas Day, does it?"

"Not at all; and perhaps that is one of the main points of difference between a Southern Christmas and the Christmas of any other section of the country. No, we devote the whole of the holiday week to holiday entertainment and holiday hospitality, and many and varied are the entertainments given. First one large house and its guests start the ball rolling, and back and forth across the country it goes flying, generally winding up on New Year's Day with a real old-fashioned keeping 'open house.'"

"That is where the eggnog makes its appearance, isn't it?" I hazarded.

"Yes, the big punch bowl which figured so largely at the Christmas dinner and at all the big occasions during the week was kept always full of eggnog on New Year's Day, and a cold collation was spread, ready for our callers. The latter began coming very early in the day, for calling had not gone out of vogue ten or fifteen years ago. It was a long, exciting and merry day, and I think all of us regret that the pretty old custom has gone out of fashion. Perhaps it will come in again some day, and once more it will be the vogue for hostesses to announce that they will 'receive' on New Year's Day."

"What did the collation consist of?" I inquired, for I had become greatly interested in the idea of the thing and eager for details.

"At our house we usually served oysters,

salad, old Virginia ham, cold turkey and black cake."

### Famous Gibson Punch.

"I've been told that you are the originator—or should I say inventor—of a very famous punch, Mrs. Gibson. Do you ever divulge the secret of its concoction?"

"Oh, yes; and if you want to know it I'll be very glad to tell it to you."

"Indeed I do," I answered with a good deal of emphasis, and Mrs. Gibson gave me the following details of the "Regent Punch":

"Two dozen quarts American champagne; one bottle Maraschino; one bottle Curaçao; one bottle Angostura bitters; three pints Jamaica rum; one pint French brandy."

"Dissolve one and a half pounds of loaf sugar in three quarts of green tea. Mix all well together, leaving champagne to be put in last. Add the juice of eight lemons and six oranges. Serve in punch bowl with plenty of ice. This is for 125 persons; and my Wabash punch, which my friends have been good enough to call excellent, is as follows:

"Six lemon rinds, cut thin; one quart lemon juice; two pounds sugar dissolved in the juice; one gallon green tea; mix well and add one gallon whisky or brandy; one quart rum; one quart Curaçao; one gallon sweet Sarsaparilla; six bottles champagne."

"You have mentioned eggnog very frequently," I remarked, "but you haven't gone into details. Is that a forbidden subject? or may I have the honor to give that recipe to the Christmas readers?"

"If you want it," Mrs. Gibson replied, generously. "This will make two gallons: Two pounds powdered sugar and thirty eggs beaten together, three pints brandy, one quart Jamaica rum."

### Secret of Good Eggnog.

"Liquor should be added a little at a time until there is enough to cook the eggs—that is the secret of a good eggnog. Stir into this three pints of rich cream; then beat up one quart of cream to put on top; sprinkle with grated nutmeg, and it is ready to serve."

"And now," she said, "I think that I've told you about all there is to tell of a Christmas in the South, and yet I haven't dwelt upon the one thing which makes that so different from the Christmas of other parts of the country. It is the spirit of hospitality which marks our celebrations."

"We look forward to holiday week as the time of all times when the scattered members of the family go home to the old roof-tree and are children again, when old ties are renewed and old bonds strengthened."

"It seems to mean more to us in the South—perhaps that is imagination on my part—yet I think that the real reason lies in the fact that we are accustomed to entertaining more, and the holidays with us

do not mean just two celebrations during the week—Christmas and New Year's—but at least ten days of family joking and of being together."

### Christmas Among the Chinese.

Of course only that infinitesimal body of Chinese who have been converted to Christianity celebrate the anniversary of Christ's birth because it is his anniversary.

Nevertheless, the entire period from about the middle of December until the middle of January in our calendar is given up to various celebrations.

First comes a celebration, not in honor of a god, but of a devil. This devil, known as Ah Toa, is dreaded as an omnipotent destroyer. All through China and in the Chinese quarters of San Francisco and New York religious services to propitiate this deity begin in what is our December. Then come services in honor of ancestors. The principal part is played by male and female religious servants, who are bound not to swear, not to talk nonsense, not to be immoral or luxurious, and not to show any favor to infidel opinions.

The winter celebrations among the Chinese close with the celebration of the new year. This lasts a long, joyous week.

### An Old-Fashioned Christmas.

Christmas like it used to be! That's the kind would gladden me. With and kin from far and near. Joining in the Christmas cheer. Oh, the laughing girls and boys! Oh, the feasting and the joys! Wouldn't it be good to see Christmas as it used to be?

Christmas as it used to be—Snow-capped evergreen trees, Bells a-jingling down the lane, Cousins John and Jim and Jane, Bae and Kate and all the rest Driv'ing up in their Sunday best. Coming to the world of gloom—Christmas like it used to be.

Christmas like it used to be—Been a long, long time since we wished (when Santa Claus would come) You a doll and I a drum. You a book and I a sled, Strong and swift and painted red; Oh, that day of jubilee! Christmas like it used to be.

Christmas like it used to be! It is still as glad and free And as full of truth To the tender eyes of youth. Could we gladly glimpse it through Eyes our children's children do, In their joy, time we would see Christmas like it used to be. —Edna Whelan in Moore's Magazine.